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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 004584

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EAIR](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#) [DEMARCHE](#)
SUBJECT: MFA U/S ON IRAN, BOEING, GCC SUMMIT, LEBANON, AND PALESTINIANS

REF: STATE 195195

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: According to Kuwaiti MFA U/S Jarallah, the French were "talking tough" on Iran during the Amir's recent visit to Paris. He said French interlocutors anticipate near-term U.S. policy adjustments on Iraq. On Lebanon, the French FM called for pressure on Syria and support for the Siniora government. Airbus made a pitch for a role in Kuwait Airways' expansion plan. The Ambassador made clear U.S. expectations that Kuwaiti aircraft purchases are made on a strictly competitive basis. Jarallah said the GCC summit will likely produce a strong statement of support for the Siniora government, but only indirect criticism of Iranian and Syrian behavior. A UNSC resolution on Iran would give the GCC cover to take a harder public line. While Palestinian PM Haniyah has requested a visit to Kuwait, the GOK has again put off accepting such a visit, and does not plan to have him here anytime soon. End Summary.

Amir's Visit: French "Talk Tough" on Iran, Pitch Airbus

¶2. (C) In a 12/6 meeting with the Ambassador, MFA U/S Khalid Jarallah (recently promoted to the personal rank of minister) said the Amir's recent visit to France was marked by "very good" discussions with Chirac, Foreign Minister Douste-Blazy, and others on a range of issues. On Iran, Jarallah said the French are "talking tough," and maintaining they will not allow Iran to "play games with the international community." The Kuwaitis made clear their apprehension over any Iranian nuclear program, civil or military, given Kuwait's close proximity to the reactors. The French responded that proper international monitoring of an Iranian civilian program should at least give Kuwait some reassurance on safety questions. On Iraq, FM Douste-Blazy said France sees neighboring countries as part of the solution, and is anticipating adjustments in U.S. policy as a result of the Iraq Study Group report and other reviews underway. Douste-Blazy emphasized the need to pressure Syria on its role in Lebanon, and expressed strong support for the Siniora government.

¶3. (C) U/S Jarallah noted that Kuwait now has USD 7 billion in direct investment in France, and plans to increase that. Kuwait also encouraged France to step up its involvement in major projects in Kuwait. The Amir met during his visit with Airbus' CEO, who pitched Airbus aircraft to accommodate Kuwait Airways' expansion plan. According to Jarallah, the Amir told Airbus that Kuwait was listening to Boeing as well, and that the contract would be awarded on a competitive basis. The Ambassador made clear that we expect and ask for a strictly competitive process that looks at American-origin aircraft, not the origin of particular parts. Jarallah said this is precisely the Amir's intent.

GCC Summit Preview: Pressing Iran

¶4. (C) On the GCC summit, Ambassador noted the importance of support for the Iraqi government, particularly from Iraq's GCC neighbors, and the need to send a strong signal on Iran. Likewise, a strong statement on Lebanon, supporting the Siniora government and condemning Syria's destructive role is vital. Jarallah said the GCC statement will have a strong message of support for Siniora, but admitted frankly that the language on Iran and Syria will likely be at best indirectly critical. He said the roadblock right now for the GCC on Iran is UN cover. "Once the Russians get on board, and the UNSC adopts the resolution, there will be a new policy in this region, and there will be real pressure on Iran." Jarallah said the Iranians are starting to feel the heat already, noting Ahmedinejad's recent comments on the resolution. Jarallah cautioned that any opening to Iran on Iraq should be carefully calibrated to avoid relieving pressure on Iranian misbehavior in Lebanon. Jarallah said he had little hope that Iran would be induced to change its course, but that Syria was in a different position. Given the right circumstances, he said, Syria would be willing to cooperate on both Iraq and Lebanon.

Haniyeh Visit: Not Happening Soon

¶5. (C) Ambassador raised reftel points on a possible visit by Palestinian PM Haniyeh to Kuwait. Jarallah said Haniyeh had made a request, but that the GOK had postponed the visit several times, and planned to keep postponing for the time being. He noted the Amir's travel, to Riyadh and then the

KUWAIT 00004584 002 OF 002

rest of the month in Morocco, would be a perfect excuse.

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